

5 a Day-Power Play!

News



Your Child and Fad Diets

Overweight is a serious problem in the United States. When it comes to food, Americans eat plenty of protein, fat and sugar, but fall short of whole grains, fruits and vegetables. This unbalanced intake means an increase of saturated fat and cholesterol, which can lead to an increased risk of heart disease and other chronic diseases. You and your child need plenty of whole grains, fruits and vegetables rich in carbohydrates to grow strong and healthy.

Human nature looks for a quick, cheap, and easy solution for everything—including weight loss. Low carbohydrate “fad” diets are popular, but they are not healthy, especially for children. Diets that encourage decreasing or severely limiting carbohydrates result in fast loss of water and nutrients, not fat. Remember, when you reduce carbohydrates from your diet or your child’s diet, you decrease

carbohydrates result in fast loss of water and nutrients, not fat. Remember, when you reduce carbohydrates from your diet or your child’s diet, you decrease vitamins, minerals, and fiber. In decreasing carbohydrates you lower your child’s overall calorie intake. In other words, your child is eating less of the things they need most. Don’t fall for this gimmick!

Another problem with low-carb fad diets results from an increase of protein, which robs calcium from the body. This robbery may set your body up for osteoporosis in the future. A high protein diet may also cause problems with the kidneys.

The healthiest carbohydrates are found in fruits, vegetables and whole grains, like brown rice, corn tortillas and whole wheat bread. No food is bad when eaten in moderation. However, limiting fat and sugar from snack foods and sodas is always a healthy idea!

The Focus is Health, Not Weight

In order to change or develop healthy habits, it can be helpful to clarify the important things in your life and set an example for your child. What is important, health or image? This is known as value clarification.

Behavior change is the next goal to work on. Behavior change is an act that changes your everyday behavior. For instance, if ice cream is your child’s weakness, do not bring it to your home or eat ice cream in front of your child. This behavior change helps to decrease temptation and create a positive role model for your child.

Portion control can help maintain weight. In order to understand healthy

portion sizes, follow the USDA’s Food Guide Pyramid. The Food Guide Pyramid encourages variety and moderation for you and your child.

Finally, activity is an important piece in the weight maintenance puzzle. Make time in the day for physical activity with your child. Start with small goals such as parking at the far end of a parking lot and walking. Take the dog for a walk instead of watching TV or playing video games. Other family activity ideas may be found in Parent Tips Vol. 1, Issue 3.

If your child has been diagnosed as overweight, it is important to work with the doctor to design the best approach for your child’s health

5 a Day-Power Play! Campaign

Volume 1, Issue 10

Newsletter Date

Seven Signs of a Fad Diet

- Magic or miracle food or drink
- Rapid weight loss
- No exercise
- Bizarre amount or type of food
- Specific food combination
- Hard to follow menus
- Use of testimonials

Check with your doctor before altering your diet, or your child’s!

For more information about the **5 a Day-Power Play! Campaign**, please contact:

Melodee Lopez, R.D.
at (909) 387-6320

Or visit our website at
www.sbcounty.gov/eatwell